/11 cont'd/

"If we advance our troops, we must transfer the Lang-mu and raise Ta-shou troops, and thus have several tens of thousands for reenforcements." If these "Han-ta troops," "Lang-t'u soldiers," and the "Lang-mu," the "Ta-shou," etc., all were Miao troops, or if Miao troops constituted a part of them, we may conclude that the Miao troops who were repeatedly moved there could not have numbered less /12/ than 10,000. Another important question is whether these Miao troops brought their women along with them, or whether it was only in a later period that they began to increase prolifically through marrying the women of other groups in the Hainan area? This is a very interesting question worthy of study. It is, of course, closely related to the physical type of the present Miao people, and it is also directly related to the question of the number of original Miao immigrants. As far as I know, even at the present time, marriage among the Miao is still limited to their own group. To marry members of other groups (such as the Chinese, Li, Ch'i, Hsiao, and others) is forbidden. Thus it is very probable that the Miao troops brought their women with them when they first came. There might have been an equal number of women accompanying the original 10,000 Miao troops. Hence, the number of earliest Miao immigrants would have been over 10,000 at the very least.

Secondly, we shall examine the numbers recorded in the local annals. In the annals of Ch'iung-chou Prefecture, it is stated that the Miao in Tan-chou consisted of "about 90 families living in ten villages; including men and women they number less than a thousand." Since they numbered "less than a thousand," we may suppose that there were 500. An average village might consist of ten families of five members each. According to the same source, there were five Miao villages in Ch'iung-shan district. To use the same method of statistical averages for measurement, the five villages might have consisted of 50 families with 250 individuals. According to the annals of Kan-en district, there were "several hundred Miao families" in this particular district. Let us suppose that there were 500 families. Using the same method of calculation, there might have been 50 villages with a total population of 2,500, not counting those who

592 /30 cont'd/
594 seems to be more prevalent. It is not uncommon to see a Miao
596 family of eight to ten people, of three generations, father, son, grandson, living in a single thatched hut.

592 A family at the least consists of a man, his wife, and their
593 children. The father is, of course, the head of the family, who is
562 in charge of the affairs of the whole family. Every member of the family must obey his directions in everyday family work, and even in personal behavior each receives his concern. For instance, in the
582 marriage of sons and daughters, although free choice as the basis of
584 marriage is permitted in many cases, there are also many marriages which are arbitrarily determined by the head of the family. In the latter case, the children have no way of raising objections. Generally, the father in a Miao family is more powerful and respected than he is in a Li family.

593 There is a big difference in another aspect, the position of the
171 man and woman in the family. The Miao women are submissive. From what I have heard, this is completely different from the manner of the Li women. It is easy for a Miao husband to give orders to his wife while the Li husband is unable to do so. However,
595 it is rather strange that polygamy is completely forbidden among the Miao. Regardless of whether he is wealthy or not, or whether he has a son /31/ or not, a Miao husband can never take a second wife (i.e. concubine), unless his first wife has died. For instance, the Miao headman, Lu Tsun-ying, is generally considered to be wealthy and influential. He is already fifty years old and is still without an heir, but he has no intention of taking a concubine. We have not yet been able to point out clearly the background which has created this kind of rule. The following two points may serve as possible explanations. In the first place, the Miao have only a
[182] limited area of land, and it is hard for them to make a living on it. Forbidding concubinage may serve to avoid the problem of overpopu-
[582] lation. Secondly, they have strictly followed the rule of marriage within the group (i.e., a Miao may only marry a Miao). But the entire Miao population is not very large. In order to maintain a balance between the male and female population, monogamy must

Chapter VI. Customs and Practices

1. Birth

852 Twelve days after the birth of a Miao child, his family always holds a "twelfth-day" celebration for him; after a month there is a "first-month" celebration. The family kills chickens and cook meat. They ask a Taoist priest to come to pray for him and name him. 651 The child is usually named "Ya Ta" /Ya the Elder/ or "Ya Erh" /Ya the Second/, etc. There is also a celebration of his first birthday, but the way it is celebrated is unknown to me.

2. Marriage

582 The Miao are generally betrothed when they are about twenty years old. Betrothals are either made through the decision of the 584 parents and the advice of go-betweens, or they are made after a couple have fallen in love and ask the parents for permission and the consultation of a go-between. In the latter case, the parents always respect their children's wishes. According to Miao custom, however, before the formal betrothal, the hour, day, month, and year of birth of the young couple (these are entered in the family registers) must be "compared" by someone who is able to read the almanac well [622 (generally a chia-ch'ang). If their horoscopes are in harmony with 787] each other and are not contradictory to those of the parents of both families, they are formally betrothed; otherwise, they must give each other up. Therefore, even if a couple are deeply in love and the match is approved of by the parents, if, unfortunately, their horoscopes are not "harmonious," they cannot marry. Many tragedies of lovers have resulted therefrom. 583 Betrothal presents consist of [431] about 20 dollars (previously 10 dollars or less), three jars of wine, three pecks of rice, and 30 catties of pork. There are two types of marriage: one is the ch'ü-hsi, in which the betrothal presents are 583 given by the bridegroom's /47/ family; the other is the chao-chui 591 /literally, "to call a son-in-law," a marriage in which the son-in-608 law comes to live in the wife's family/ in which the betrothal presents are given by the bride's family.

/50 cont'd/

585 stood outside the door waiting for a Taoist priest to perform the ritual before entering the house. After that she entered the house escorted by a woman. In the evening the bridegroom's family also held a dinner to entertain their relatives and friends, and that brought an end to the wedding ceremony. After the wedding was over, the two bridesmaids were each rewarded with 300 cash and three catties of pork. The cash was given by the bride's family and the pork by the bridegroom's.

On the morning of the third day, the new couple went back to the bride's home; but on the fourth, they went over to the bridegroom's home again and returned to the bride's home the day after.

585 Thereafter, the bridegroom remained in his wife's home and became
608 a member of her family, sharing all the privileges and obligations. After the death of his parents-in-law, he may either move away from his wife's family with his wife, or change his surname to that of his father-in-law so that he becomes a member of that family forever.

585 I did not have the opportunity to observe personally the manner in which the wedding of the ch'ü-hsi type is celebrated. However, it was said that it is entirely similar to the wedding of the chao-chui type except that the roles of the families of the man and woman are reversed.

587 There is no ceremony when a widow remarries, nor are there any betrothal gifts. When they decide to be married, the man merely furnishes a chicken, which they eat together, and the marriage is concluded.

There are some additional points worth noting about marriage among the Miao.

● 582 /51/ (1) Those who have the same surnames are not allowed to marry one another. However, if they are sure that they have no particular blood relationship but simply have the same surname, the marriage is sometimes permissable.

(2) The average age to marry for either sex is about twenty.

585 (3) The Miao people avoid getting married in the third month of the lunar year, when the cotton flower and a plant called toon

/141 cont'd/

585 be emptied, but luckily, a guest, seeing my predicament, came to
574 my rescue and persuaded the host to let me go. At this moment, I took the opportunity to flee from the house as if I were being released from jail. A few steps outside the village gate, we saw a Hsiao lying at the side of the road, dead drunk and snoring profusely, while another Hsiao, a little more sober, swaying back and forth, walked ahead of us, with a scythe still hanging at his side. Afraid that he might get fresh and start playing with his scythe, we followed him all the way at a reasonable distance. Before long he fell down and lay on the road, upon which sight, we felt much relieved and proceeded on our way. When we arrived at Wen-hua center, we lodged in the primary school there.

Third month, tenth day. (Wednesday)

586 In the morning we strolled to Mao-mien village. Two comely
582 Ch'i girls talked to me for a long time. The girls were not bad-looking, but they had both had an unfortunate fate. When they were small, their parents had given them in marriage to two elderly grey-haired men. When asked whether they were willing to live with their husbands to old age, one gave a resolute "No," and the other replied, "What can I do if I do not like it?" When asked again why they were not living with their husbands, they said that, according to Li custom, a girl, after marriage, /142/ still stays in her mother's home, and until she has found another man and borne a child from this illicit union, she would not go back to live with her husband. As she talked, her manner was natural and frank without a sign of bashfulness.

361 We spent the day visiting four or five small villages in the vicinity, which were all occupied by Ch'i and Li with the surname Huang. The villages ranged from almost only ten or so families to scarcely three or four, and they looked unusually desolate. There were some sick persons in almost every village. There was an old
755 woman in Fan-san-pai village, dying whom her family asked us to cure. When we had no medicine for her, they looked rather

M /19 cont./
*101 (4) Yeh T'ou Miao. — This group also belongs to the He
CC Miao. When a girl is married, she must marry the son of her
563 maternal uncle. If the latter has no son, he must be given
M presents of ornaments and money. Otherwise she may not
[582] get married at all.

(5) Tung Tsai Miao. — They are not as numerous as the Yeh T'ou Miao, and live in separate villages. The Yeh
M Tou villages are known as the Big Villages and the Tung Tsai
[628] ones as the Small Villages, the latter being subservient to the
[582] former. Marriage is restricted to their own villages. A secret
[502] marriage to a member of a big village is a violation. The Tung Tsai are good boatmen. In Mi-no these are such tribe-
M men.

[345] (6) Pa Chai Miao. — This group is also a part of the He
[533] Miao. Near the village is provided an empty shed, where un-
[517] married men and women gather together to sing. If a couple
[584] fall in love, a cow is sent as a betrothal gift. One or two days
[583] after marriage the girl goes back home and still asks for money from her husband. If the money is not given she may marry again. In Ya-yu this custom still exists today.

/20/ (7) Ch'ien /Bamboo Grove/ Miao. — Another
M branch of the He Miao, there are many at Lieh-erh-shan.
[241] They live in dense bamboo groves on the mountain. They are
[262] not good at farming but grow some grain. They consider
[291] hempseed to be food and use hemp for their clothes.

(8) Ch'ing Chiang He Miao /Ch'ing River Black Miao/. —
[882] The unmarried men are called "lohan" and the unmarried
[527] women, "laopei." In the spring they carry wine and food up
[584] the mountain, singing and dancing reciprocally. Those who
[851] become fond of each other drink from an ox horn and get married. After a son is born, they then say they have a
[167] descendant, and begin to be willing to work in the field.

(9) Pe /White/ Miao. — They originated in Kwei-ting
[291] and Lung-li in Kweichow. They esteem white clothes, go
[302] bareheaded and barefooted, and coil up their hair with crude
[782] hairpins. A big bull is selected for the ancestral sacrifice.
[763]

2:Ling & Ruey--128 E-5 (1933) 1947 AE5 Miao AE5

CHAPTER FIVE

THE FAMILY AND MARRIAGE AND FUNERAL CUSTOMS

(1) The Family

The basic social organization /sic/ of the Miao is the family, and moreover their family structure is the small family system, which consists of husband, wife, and children under age. This kind of small family system is the original system of the Miao. The Miao Fang Pei Lan, in the chapter on villages, says: "Among the Miao people father and sons and brothers do not live together in one house. When a son grows up he lives apart, erecting a new house and then there is another household." Because of the small family system their living quarters as a rule consist of two or three rooms. In the house there is only one bed, and the husband, wife, and children all sleep on it together. When a girl grows up, a separate bed may be set up for her. As a rule the Miao practice monogamy. Sometimes they take a concubine, to live together with the wife, or to live separately. In the family economy, men and women share agricultural work, but household chores are mainly the women's responsibility. Family property consists of fields, houses, animals, and furniture, tools, and utensils. When the children grow up, a boy gets married at 17 or 18, and is given a certain amount of property in order to build a separate house and establish a family. A girl marries at fifteen or sixteen. So, the small family system among the Miao can always be maintained, and is not likely to be expanded.

Because of strict adherence to the small family system, clan organization cannot develop. Among the pure Miao there are the following five surnames: Wu, Lung, Liao, Shih, and Ma. Such surnames as Yang, Shih, P'eng, Chang, and Hung were those of outsiders who married into Miao families and

/93 cont./
551 adopted their ways. Among the Shih /"rock"/ and Lung /"dragon"/ there are the Ta /"big"/ Shih and Shao /"small"/ Shih, the Ta Lung and Shao Lung. Shao Shih is also written with the character shih meaning "time," and Shao Lung, also
582 with the character lung meaning "eminent." Although they
[614] have surnames, they do not have a closely knit organization of family clans, and so formerly they did not object to marriage between people of the same surname. However, no marriage
[177] was permitted between close relatives. In recent years they have come under Chinese influence, and know that people of
[551] the same surnames must not marry. Shao Shih /"small rock"/ was changed to be written with the character shih meaning "time," and Shao Lung /"small dragon"/ was changed to be written with the character lung meaning "eminent," in order to separate them from Ta Shih /"big rock"/ and Ta Lung /"big dragon"/, so that they could intermarry. Today, Miao family
177 life has become more and more like that of the Chinese, and
594 marriage and funeral rites largely follow Chinese customs,
764 barely retaining remnants of some Miao customs.

(2) Marriage

836 /94/ Among the Miao the premarital sex life of the young men and women is rather free. When a virgin has intercourse with a man, her parents know about it but do not forbid it. On the contrary, they consider this evidence that the man finds their daughter desirable. Sometimes, the girl brings home her lover, and her parents will kill a chicken to entertain him.
[345] There are even public houses set up specially for the use of young men and women to gather together. For instance, in Chapter II reference was made to the Pa Chai Miao, recorded in Yung-sui T'ing Chih, to the effect that an empty shed was built near the village, where unmarried men and women gathered
[584] together to sing. If a couple fell in love, a cow was sent as a
[517] betrothal gift. Again, the unmarried men among the Ch'ing
[533] Chiang He Miao were called "lohan"; in the spring they would

/94 cont./

836 517 [533] [535] carry wine and food up the mountain, singing and dancing reciprocally. Those who became fond of each other would drink from an ox horn. There is the custom among the Miao of dancing for the new year, dancing for the moon, and singing for autumn. On such occasions, young men and women form groups and sing in response to each other all night until daybreak. After singing they mix with each other, drinking and joking, even to the extent of having sexual relations. This is called fang yeh "going wild."

●582 [584] Although unmarried men and women are free to fall in love, marriage, however, requires parental consent as well as the approval of the maternal uncle of the girl. The He Miao of Ch'ing Chiang, Kweichow have a marriage custom where they betroth the daughter of a paternal aunt to be the daughter-in-law of a maternal uncle. Should the maternal uncle have no son, the girl's family has to pay a large sum of money to him. Without such a payment the girl all her life may not marry. The Miao, other than close paternal cousins not being suitable mates, they do not object to marriage between people of the same surname. However, maternal cousins may not marry. 582 611 This is a survival from a matrilineal society, because in a matrilineal society maternal cousins have the same surname whereas cross cousins or male and female first cousins on the father's side have different surnames. That maternal cousins cannot marry is evidence of their advance from a matrilineal society to a patrilineal society. The importance of the maternal uncle's position in sacrificial ceremonies as well as in the society is additional evidence.

514 583 The former marriage customs of the Miao were slightly different from their present ways. Yung-sui T'ing Chih says: "Miao marriage is just like a purchase. They do not follow the /Chinese/ custom of asking names (as a preliminary to fixing a betrothal) and sending presents to the bride's home to fix the betrothal. They only negotiate about the number of horses and cattle through a broker. The broker is a Miao marriage go-between. It definitely requires five or six horses or heads 000 of cattle to initiate a trade for one wife. When the agreement

/94 cont./ When the agreement
585 is reached an inauspicious /sic/ day is chosen to welcome the
[292] wife. The bride wears a moon-white gown and walks holding a parasol, half open, half shut, called the shame-hiding parasol. Her father and mother, brothers, and relatives escort her to
[583] the husband's house. The dowry consists of everything from cattle and sheep and goats to plows and harrows. They do not enter by the main door but through a hole bored through a wall. Men and women sit together. The bride is not allowed to look left or right, or else the husband would be displeased for fear that shemay be fond of some one else. The couple takes each a bowl of rice, a piece of fish, and a cup of wine dregs. Next they visit the paternal uncles' houses in the same village, at each eating and drinking the same items. On their return home they are husband and wife, but they do not spend the night to-
[582] gether." It also says: "The Miao do not object to marriage between people of the same surname, but relatives do not marry. On the wedding night the bride sleeps with her mother, who leaves only when the groom gives her some silver as a gift /95/, called the "mother's money" or "milk money." It is generally about two or three liang of silver. A wealthy family,
556 seeing a pretty girl, might order their son to drag the girl from
583 behind. This is called "carrying off a woman and marrying
584 her by force." The girl's family attracted by their wealth, do not engage the girl to anyone else, but get a go-between to discuss betrothal presents. When a virgin has an affair with
836 a man, her parents know about it but do not forbid it. On the contrary, they consider this evidence that the man finds her
684 desirable. But, if one's wife or concubine is seduced, then
[837] they raise knives, facing each other, and money is required as compensation. If a husband and wife do not get along,
586 the husband may divorce her and marry again, and the wife may do the same. As to improper sexual conduct, instances
837 were very rare even in former days, and today the Miao have become more aware of ethical and moral obligations." (What is recorded in the Miao Fang Pei Lan is to the same effect.)

3: Moninger E-5 (no date) 1921 AE5 Miao AF5

582 585 [591] The young people are married at seventeen or eighteen, and it seems to make no difference whether the young couple live with the groom's parents, the bride's parents, or set up housekeeping in their own home. The wedding is usually held at the groom's home, two or three young girls and a young man or two from his village going for the bride and escorting her back. The bride wears no distinctive dress except a peculiar headdress under her kerchief, and an embroidered girdle of undyed cloth. She also carries two small towels of this same material thrown over her shoulders, and one to cover her face. According to their custom, the bride and groom sit on the same bench and eat and drink together, and then declare their allegiance to the family by serving tea to the parents or in some other simple way.

771 [797] The Miao in their heathen state apparently worshipped any and all gods in an effort to appease them but with little definite idea or set ritual. Idols do not seem to be in evidence in their houses, and being a roving people, they have no temples. They have within the last few years become interested in the Gospel and whole villages have become Christian, much as has been the case in the mass movement, so-called, in India. They are a simple people, highly emotional and temperamentally religious, which is often true of hill peoples. Thus certain emotional phases of religion immediately become paramount in their eyes, and without careful teaching they are liable to be led astray on these points.

797 [212] The Miao have no written language of their own, but pick up Chinese character with amazing rapidity. The Christian villages each put up a chapel at their own expense, meet every morning for prayer before they go to their work, and every evening for a short service and an hour or so of study. When a Chinese evangelist or a missionary comes to the village, they study until midnight, when they are sent home in self-defence by the teachers—and at 2 a.m. they are up pounding rice, so that we wonder when they sleep. They are a wonderfully interesting people, these "Children of the Forest," as they style themselves, and it is a rare privilege to be among them and come to know them.

4:Mickey E-5 (1940-?) 1947 AE5 Miao AE5

one valley which contained Cowrie Shell Miao only. All these peoples attend the same markets and have some social relations with one another. These relations, however, do not extend to intermarriage in the case of the Cowrie Shell Miao, who marry only among themselves. Since they consider themselves descendants of a single ancestor, the Cowrie Shell Miao reckon all other Cowrie Shell Miao their kin, and one finds among them the same degree of unity as among members of a large family distributed over a considerable territory. Members of different villages come together on such occasions as bullfights and market days. They seek their wives from villages outside their own, because a man must marry a woman of a different family surname, and there is usually but one such name to a village. There are thus intervillage relations at weddings, funerals, and other "invitations to drink wine." The largest finite unit is, therefore, the village, which forms part of a larger and less well-defined continuum. The Cowrie Shell Miao as a whole have no political unity and no special leadership. They are simply an aggregation of people who trace their descent from a single ancestor, follow the same or similar customs, and speak a common language.

Family Names. Miss Li [12] listed the following surnames: Wang (王 and 任), P'an (潘), Chin (金), T'ang (唐), and Yang (揚 and 楊). From the records in the office of the *lien pao* [13] of Ting-shui-pa and of Teh-hua in Kuei-ting Hsien I added these: I (易), Lo (羅), and Wu (吳). Usually a village is composed of families, who, with perhaps a single exception, have the same surname.

Physical Appearance and Nature. Although both men and women vary in height, they are generally short of stature. The face is often broad, the nose short with wide nostrils and depressed bridge, and the eyes slanting with a pronounced epicanthic fold. However, I have seen some distinctly "Roman" noses and some with an elevated bridge. I have also seen both round and long heads among both sexes, at all ages, and in the same extended family.

[12] See p. 10.

[13] A Chinese political division. One *pao* is ten families; a *lien pao* is ten *pao*.

8: Graham E-5 (1921-1936) 1937 AE5 Miao AE5

584+

Sexual attraction naturally results in love affairs and love affairs naturally result in sexual intercourse. Sometimes this results in marriage but often it does not.

582

Children are often married at a very early age. It is not uncommon for a child to be married when only three or four years old and most children are married by the time they are twelve. Of course these are not love matches, and serious love affairs later in life with men and women to whom they are not married are quite likely to occur.

584

The normal way is for engagements to be made by the parents of the boy through go-betweens. The initiative is taken by the parents of the young man. When they have decided that they wish to make an engagement between their son and a certain girl, they call two go-betweens who are invited to a meal in the boy's home. A chicken is killed for the meal and its tongue, its bones and other parts of its body are examined to ascertain whether or not the circumstances are propitious.

If the signs are propitious, the middle men proceed to the home of the girl. There they endeavor to secure a favorable reply from the girl's parents who in turn call in go-betweens. If her parents are favorable, the go-betweens are feasted and they proceed to determine the details of the gift which must be given by the boy's parents to those of the girl. The gift may include pork, domestic animals, rice, beans, corn, money, or any other commodity. When the engagement presents have been given and accepted by the girl's parents, the engagement is complete and is seldom broken. There is a second feast for the go-betweens and other friends at the time when the engagement gifts are presented. The engagement is a contract between the parents of the young people. While the bride is not actually purchased, the value of the gift often goes a long way towards securing a favorable decision by the girl's parents.

When the go-betweens arrive at the home of the girl much of the work of making the engagement is often done by means of songs. By certain songs they announce their mission to the girl's parents. Other songs carry the work along, even to the matter of approximately arranging the gift. There are songs when the gifts are presented. Sometimes these songs take the form of contests when the two sets of go-betweens ridicule or try to outwit each other or see who can keep going the longest.

When the parents are unwilling to marry off a daughter, or nobody seeks her hand in marriage, or when the parents are unable or fail to make an engagement for a son, the marriageable person endeavors to win a mate. For this purpose he or she goes to the market place on the third day of the third moon, at *tuan yang* 端陽 on the fifth day of the

[10 cont.]

591 practiced by one tribe and then followed by others for so long a time that at last it was firmly established. There are only a few
587 couples who are separated. In such cases, they would participate in moon dance, chasing the moon, yao-ma-lang or kan-piao, and other such agencies of free love to seek their mate for a second marriage.

584 [582] When a boy reaches the age of fourteen or fifteen the parents usually negotiate marriage for him. First, a friend or a relative is asked to approach a girl's family to propose marriage. When the latter family approves, the go-between would bring the boy and his parents over for an interview. If both sides are satisfied, they then start negotiations of gifts and dowry and make arrangements for the engagement. If one side is not satisfied the matter is dropped. This refers to total strangers: between those who are acquainted with each other such arrange-
583 ments are unnecessary. In the old days the gift and dowry were given in terms of the number of cows instead of money. Recently, they have been changed to silver pieces, and the larger the amount, the more magnificent it is for the girl's family. If the amount is small then the girl's status is considered low and it becomes a disgrace to the family. When the question of the bride price is settled (with the Hua Miao the highest gift comes to $100 or more) the go-between appoints a date to convey it to the girl's family. Accepting the gift, the family gives a feast, in which friends and relatives are invited to keep the go-between company and to regale him with meat and wine. This is the engagement. Before the wedding day, the gift donation must be fully paid up through the go-between; but if the girl's family is fond of the future son-in-law, half or all the bride price may be
585 waived. On the wedding day the bridegroom's family sends along a man and a woman to welcome the bride, and sometimes the groom goes there himself. (But the groom must provide meat and wine as a welcome home feast.) The bride's parents would ask a few young girls to keep the bride company the night before, and before daybreak the party would commence the wedding march, the bride shaded under a bridal parasol. On arrival at the groom's house, the members of the party have to leap across

[20 cont.] (According to the Miao custom a girl should marry a
583 cousin on the mother's side, and if she is to marry somebody
584 else, she has to give money to her maternal uncle. This money
582 is called "niece's cash.") The girl's family would then give a feast in honor of the go-between and invite other guests to keep him company.

585 [21] Marriages generally take place during the winter harvest in the second lunar month or the autumn harvest in the tenth lunar month. At that time the groom's family will again despatch three or four young men to the bride's family, carrying nine catties of pork, a package of glutinous rice weighing about two or three catties together with the cash gift negotiated at the time of the engagement. Announcement will also be made of the date for receiving the bride (about twenty days away on a horse day or a cow day). The return gift from the girl's family at the time consists only of a package of glutinous rice and a duck. But on the wedding day the bride's family has to despatch two men early in the morning to send over to the groom's family a slaughtered pig of about fifty to sixty catties and two big baskets, approximately four pecks, of glutinous rice to herald the arrival of the bride. At the wedding march the bride is arrayed in a flowered dress, holding in her hand the flowered parasol, sent previously by the groom's family, and accompanied by eleven male and female relatives. But halfway six of them must retract their steps because grown-up girls may not visit the groom. Among the other five, one young woman acts as the bride's maid and always keeps her company. The groom's family also despatches men to carry wine and rice to meet the bridal party halfway. When the two groups meet they picnic in the field. After this the bride and her kinsmen are conducted to the groom's family.

The bridal chamber is not so well decorated as that of the Chinese, and the furniture in the room is simple and plain.
[352] Except for one or two chests of drawers for the bride's clothes which come as a part of the dowry, the rest is provided by the groom and consists of a bed, a few stools, a wooden face-basin and a foot-basin. Quilts, pillows and mat are also provided by the groom's family. That day the celebration consists of singing

[22 cont.]

586 marriage. The amount of indemnity varies from under one hundred to several hundred dollars, fixed and guaranteed by relatives of both families at the time of negotiation to avoid future complications. Of course, this kind of divorce is not only limited to pre-arranged marriages by parents, the fact is that even in marriages of love, separations often occur due to incompatibility and difference of opinions. But whenever children are born within the wedlock, divorces never occur.

768 587 [589] There are very few cases of young widowhood among the Miao-I. According to customs a young widow may return to her own family six months after the death of her husband. Among the neighboring Long-skirt Miao the wife may go out through the back door to "yao-ma lang" with another man hardly before her husband breathes his last on the deathbed. The children of the deceased father generally remain in his family to be looked after by the grandparents, but the widow may bring them along to her own family if her deceased husband's family is poor and unable to support them. [23] At the same time the widow's parents may proceed to find another husband for their daughter. After marriage the second husband has to pay $4.20 to the wife's family, from which $1.20 is given to the deceased husband's family as "incense money" for sacrifices to his spirit. At the wedding the bride is escorted on foot by two old women to her husband's house, where feasts may be given and the occasion celebrated if his family is well-to-do.

● 582 Of course, the Miao also have certain taboos in their marriage system. Between sisters and brothers, between cousins and, like the Chinese, between parties of the same surname, no marriage takes place. Sometimes certain families are not matched with others although their surnames are different. For instance, the Yang family at P'ing-chai in the Chou-ch'i district in Lu-shan never have marital relations with the Pan family across the river at Hsin-chai. Between the Chinese and the Miao there are also very few instances of intermarriage. In the country the Miao, who consist of the majority of the population, maintain the most friendly relations in utter social equality

[23 cont.]

582 with the Chinese who live among them. Many of the Chinese speak the Miao language and are even influenced by the Miao in certain habits and customs, but intermarriages are extremely rare. Actually this is not only true of the Miao and the Chinese, but also of the different Miao groups. For instance at Chou-ch'i in the Lu-shan area there are 4,000 Short-skirt Hê Miao, about 200 to 300 Chinese, and less than 100 Mu-lao Miao. For marriage, these few Mu-lao Miao have to seek contacts in other Mu-lao villages very far away and never for a moment would they think of intermarrying the Short-skirt Hê Miao on the spot.

4. Funeral

764 When a Short-skirt Hê Miao dies his family decides on a [777] lucky day to invite three or four relatives to specially wail aloud for him. The corpse is placed on a temporary scaffold about five feet from the ground on the left side of the hall and covered with sheets of coarse native cloth of about six feet long and two feet wide. The married daughters as a rule each present a sheet. [24] The unmarried daughters at home also collectively present one, though in some rich families everyone gives a sheet. These different colored sheets are used to line the coffin at the time of interment. When the corpse is being moved out of the house, the family members all wear hemp cloth on their heads and weep aloud around the body. At the [202] same time they despatch messengers to announce the bereavement to relatives living far away. In case the deceased is a man, they fire hunting rifles at the gate, or in the case of a woman, firecrackers so that those relatives within earshot may be apprised. The little table in front of the corpse is complete with spirit tablet, incense and candles, four bowls of glutinous rice, twelve cups of wine, a pig's heart and stomach, and other offerings. A priest is engaged to "open the way." He wields a dagger and a bunch of straw, uttering magic words and brandishing, at the same time, the dagger and straw, in an effort to drive away evil spirits that may obstruct the way.

/86 cont'd/ - [MIAO]

Mi 585 [262]

eaten first while drinking alcohol; it is only at the end that the corn meal is brought.... Each guest presents a coin upon his arrival. At the end of the evening meal the newly married man makes the ritual prostrations to the ancestors in the presence of all the assembled relatives, and without pronouncing a single word. He is assisted by his best man, who makes the same prostrations as he, and by an old man who enumerates aloud all the duties he will have to carry out henceforth in the tribe. Then they count the money contributed by the guests, and they take an inventory of the young wife's trousseau. This trousseau consists of clothes, skirts, turbans, belts, puttees, pieces of cloth, etc. Men and women examine...and admire the embroideries. The young wife in a corner weeps and sings to her companions the naive song of the bride...which recalls the elegy of the T'ou-jen bride on the road. At the departure of the guests the door is barricaded with a fagot to prevent the newly married wife from leaving. She watches her relatives leave through the slits of the partition.

Mi [583]

Mo [585 171]

We have spoken in the course of this work, following the notes of Father Schotter, of the girls who accompany the bride to the bridegroom's home.

Mi 582

Monogamy and exogamy seem to have always existed among the Miao. There exists also a law, or rather a custom which

/86 cont'd/

Mi 582

has the force of law, which requires taking a wife of one's own race.
Savina, Hist. des Miao, p. 284.

/87/ B. Marriages of Widows as Official Wives

Mo 587 589

Summary. -- 1. Rights of widows, theory and practice. 2. Procedure for the purchase of a widow. 3. Departure of the widow. 4. Settling of accounts. 5. Marriage of widows. 6. Two typical abductions of widows. 7. Vestiges of marriage by abduction among the T'ou-jen.

1. Rights of Widows, Theory and Practice

When parents give a daughter in marriage, they say, "We have taken leave of our daughter," or "We have given our daughter," or even with a slight scorn "We have sold her"; which denotes clearly that a girl's marriage is not her own affair but definitely the business of her parents. On the other hand, when a widow marries, they say, "She has found a man," that is, that she herself has chosen her husband and that she has acted in complete freedom. Besides, the adage says, "Ts'ien kia yeou tié-niang, heou-kia yeou pen-jen," i.e., the first marriage is arranged by the parents, subsequent marriages no longer depend on the parents but on the widow herself.

The terminology used to indicate these two kinds of marriages, as well as this adage, both throw light on the new situation of a woman in widowhood. Everything depends on her; she will remarry or not, and she will choose by herself the husband she wants. At

Mo [583]

least this is the theory. Yet in practice her right will be respected as long as her owners find no disadvantage in the decision taken by her. It may even happen that she is married off by force by her parents-in-law, and even that she is simply abducted by an unknown man. This is to say that everywhere praxis differt a speculatione /"practice differs from theory"/. But /88/ let us remember this: in case of litigation, everywhere among the T'ou-jen, the rights of the widow

[164 cont.]

768 inherited estate, upon which other children may likewise live, according to the particular arrangements agreed upon.

Among the settled "Méo" tribes (near irrigated rice fields or
423 particularly fertile areas) the idea of property is clearly established. The ground belongs to the one who has cleared it or laid it out, and it is transmitted by inheritance.

Everywhere else customs are found analogous to those of the "Man," the ground belonging temporarily to the one who cultivates it, but it is abandoned when it is exhausted or when a better piece of ground is found near which one goes and settles.

The "Méo" woman gives birth sitting on a tabouret, supported
844 by her mother and by other old women. She afterward lies down on a cot bed. The placenta is buried in front of the door, if a boy is
553 born; it is buried [165] under the hearth if it is a girl (1). Thirty-
852
[775]

1. The "Méo" must know where his placenta is so that he may retrieve it when he is reincarnated.

three days after his birth the child receives his name. Relatives and friends bring presents to him and this is the occasion for a feast
[527] as sumptuous as the resources of the family permit. Gifts and feasts are renewed upon all the birthdays. In principle, the children are
853 nursed for three years.

Abortion is practiced among the "Méo" for all irregular
847 pregnancies (unmarried women and widows). In case of failure, the baby simply is abandoned from the moment of his birth and dies of hunger.

Among certain "Méo" tribes of China the "couvade" still is
846 practiced (the husband goes to bed during the accouchement and receives treatment). This custom is not practiced by the "Méo" of Tonkin, but one observes among them customs that appear to be derived from it. The husband must follow a vegetable diet, he is forbidden to be away from home and to cross over the passes leading toward the neighboring valleys.

582 The "Méo" may contract marriage, either within their own clan, or within any other tribe of the group. They marry very seldom outside their group.

/32 cont./

597 Married couples may adopt any number of children; no limits are set. In connection with the adoption of a strange and
[582] purchased child, the ancestors and the god of heaven are offered the same sacrifice as I described in the case of the adoption of a child belonging to the sib. From now on the adopted child
[428] bears /33/ the family name of the adoptive parents and is qualified to inherit just like an own child. In relation to the latter there is no difference in the treatment and legal position of the
[851] adopted children. They are by no means treated as servants, but are received into the family community with the same ceremony as a newborn child of one's own sib (cf. the chapter, "Life in the Community," section on "Naming and Admission into the Family Community"). Once the adoption is completed, the old family no longer has any jurisdiction whatsoever over the child given up, and conversely the new family cannot claim any rights for this child from its former family.

597 184 According to information by Dhuraratsadorn (1), among

1. Page 167.

the Meau in Thailand parents are not permitted to adopt a child if they have a son. If they have only daughters, however, and wish to perpetuate their family, it is said that they adopt a boy from another family, who then marries one of the daughters and carries on the name and the family of the adoptive parents. If a married couple is childless, however, it is said that they are permitted to obtain only a boy of a related family. If this,
[595] too, is not possible, the wife, according to the author named, must procure a concubine for her husband, with whom he tries to perpetuate the family. I did not find confirmation for these statements.

/91 cont./

595 sleep." Another gave the opinion: "He enjoys himself with
833 several at the same time"; a third said: "The others look on."
513 Even though, as I /92/ could observe, the natives sleep so soundly as a rule that one can pull the sleeping mats from under the body or, as I literally experienced, can fire a gun without awakening them, still I cannot believe that young wives in particular sleep as soundly as my informants maintained. However, that may be, in any case it is certain that a woman never has intercourse with several men at the same time; the reverse is more likely.

183 As has been mentioned, among the Meau the public de-
836 mands chastity of young girls in order that the young men,
[562] whose marriage is desired as early as possible, will soon decide to take this step. This demand is untenable, however, for, on the one hand, the young men, as was discussed in detail, enjoy
[584] complete freedom, and, on the other hand, it is the boy who chooses a girl to marry. Since the girls, however, are censured only if caught in the act, they generally have no objection to premarital sexual intercourse, which they secretly submit to against the wish and will of their parents, although maintaining secrecy is very difficult if only for external reasons, in view of the smallness of the Meau villages. In fact, my informants laconically answered my question as to what they would do if they discovered that their daughters were having a love affair: "We could do nothing if there were no consequences." As far
● [582] as I was able to observe, the girls take advantage of this situation, depending upon when they marry, which is usually at the age of twenty or twenty-one. Lajonquière (1) and Abadie (2),

1. II, p. 315.

2. Page 151.

for instance, write that "the virtue of the girls is not beyond reproach," and that in practice the Meau attach little importance to this fact.

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/93 cont./

M 114 847 848 an attempt is made, with the help of medicines, to bring about an abortion. If this is unsuccessful, the child is abandoned after birth and dies of hunger." These statements, which Abadie (2) repeats verbatim, do not agree, as has been said.

2. Page 165.

with my findings.

M 827 ● 582 [163] Among the Meau the average age of marriage for the young men is between sixteen and seventeen, that of the girls about four years later.

In explanation of this age difference, I was told that it is only after this age that a girl's body is strong enough to bear without harm the minimum of ten children expected of a woman. Earlier births are said to weaken the organism, and the women turn into invalids and are no longer able to do the proper amount of work. The /94/ young men, on the other hand, are able to beget strong children at a much earlier age.

M 595 [152] [554] As a consequence of this attitude the first wife of a Meau is generally older, more mature, and stronger than her husband. The younger, later wives can therefore be all the more easily absorbed into the household, especially since jealousy plays no role at all. The first wife is the chief wife, to whom all the other wives are subordinate in every respect. Accordingly, she has a position of trust within the community.

A 864 [515] [833] A M [842] A 836 Among the Akha the father sleeps with the unmarried sons, the mother with the unmarried girls, each in one room of the dwelling. During the night the father visits the mother, or vice versa, "when everybody is asleep," as my informant put it. Thus, even in the parents' house there is no barrier to prevent the children from observing sexual activities from the earliest age. Like the Meau, the Akha, too, are well acquainted with the physiological aspect of paternity. Nevertheless sexual freedom for unmarried persons prevails among them

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/109 cont./

M 174 583 432 [648] 614 [736] to selling one's own wife. Some persons perhaps consider the intermediary activities of the Chinese traders as wife purchase (see the chapter, "Trade"). I do not think that this is correct, for, although young and pretty Meau women are sold outright by such traders, they are almost always temporarily accepted by the sib as unfree persons who are soon to marry a young man of the sib. Moreover, most of these cases concern women who have been unhappily married. I shall discuss this in detail in the section on "Dissolution of Marriage" in this chapter.

A 583 648 Contrary to the statements in the Siam Soc. Report (1),

1. I, p. 167.

I did not find any such activities by the Chinese traders among the Akha.

f) Marriage Obstacles and Regulations

M 582 648 563 Theoretically there is no tribal endogamy among the Meau in Thailand, so that here the Meau may marry their neighbors, the Tin, Kamuk, and, indeed, even Lao. Only with respect to the Yau does a strict marriage prohibition exist. Since, however, I could not find a single instance of a Meau who had married someone outside his tribe, it can probably be said that in practice even a strict tribal endogamy prevails. On the other hand, marriages between the various Meau tribes, that is, between the White and Black Meau, and so forth (see the chapter, "Statistical and Demographic Data and Differences between the Various Meau and Akha Tribes"), are common. M [114] Even Lajonquière (2), whose statements are borrowed almost

2. II, p. 193.

verbatim by Abadie (3), reports that in Indochina marriages be-

3. Page 165.

tween /110/ the various Meau tribes are customary, but those between Meau and other ethnic groups are rarer.

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Miao AE5

/110 cont./

A 582 648 563 114 [609] [535] Among the Akha, on the other hand, the strict tribal endogamy is not relaxed even theoretically. As a rule strangers to the tribe may not even appear at the dancing places as spectators! The Census of Burma (1), however, speaks of a strong mixture with the Chinese, which I myself was unable to verify anywhere. Scott (2), too, mentions that the Akha women are instantly willing to marry any stranger," and that the "girls are inexpensive and not particular." To be sure, these reports say nothing about what region they are dealing with, so I was unable to ascertain whether or not these were perhaps tribal splinter-groups that more or less voluntarily were subject to the Chinese.

1. Vol., XI, p. 183.

2. II, p. 270.

A M 582 835 Besides the above-mentioned and practiced tribal endogamy, among the Meau, as well as among the Akha, blood relationship up to the third generation /Glied, "member, rank, generation"/ is viewed as an obstacle to marriage. Beyond that, however, among both peoples bearers of the same name may marry.

A 835 614 178 Though the incest rules are strictly applied -- Telford (3) even writes that incest is punished by being buried alive -- nevertheless among the Akha there is a custom that relaxes these regulations. It is of special importance particularly in the mountains of Thailand, where there are small enclaves of the very prolific Akha, who are able to maintain only loose connections with the compactly settled groups. If in such enclaves there are especially many offspring, even for the Akha, within a sib, the two oldest family heads, who are usually A [574] brothers, organize a great festival in which all the members

3. Page 149.

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/110 cont./

A 835 614 178 [574] of the family participate. For this gathering pigs are slaughtered, and rice and alcohol are served. Then the two eldest divide the younger members of the family into two groups, each of which is placed under one of the two heads. Then the two elders decide to form different families from then on. From this moment on the members of the two newly-formed groups may intermarry, no matter what their actual blood relationship may be. /111/

A 582 Otherwise the great importance attached to the obstacles to marriage may be seen from the social customs, which in part are observed in such a way that the young people cannot be tempted to violate the existing obstacles to marriage (see the chapter, "Talent, Knowledge, Character, Morality, and Manners").

A M ●582 [614] [621] Theoretically local exogamy does not prevail among either the Akha or the Meau. In the small Meau villages in northern Thailand, however, which are usually inhabited by only a single sib, it is observed in practice, since bearers of other family names are rarely found in one village. Except for the marriage restrictions described, however, there is a free choice of mates; among neither the Akha nor the Meau can an individual be forced to select his partner from a certain sib or a certain village. Savina (1) speaks in general of exogamy.

A M [114]

1. II, p. 284.

It seems to me, however, that he does not interpret the concept quite correctly, for from his description of the conditions it becomes unmistakably clear that true tribal endogamy is involved.

g) Dissolution of Marriage

M 587 Upon the death of one of the spouses, the surviving party may marry again among both the Meau and Akha.

A [587] If the wife dies, the husband as a rule simply takes a new wife as though he had never been married (see the section on

/117 cont./

764 114 Other forms of burial, including platform-burial, are unknown among the Meau in Thailand according to my observations, contrary to the statements made by Seidenfaden (2).

2. II, p. 173.

765 /118/ And just as little is known about any later digging up of all or part of the corpse. On the other hand, according to statements of the Meau, the Yau later clean the bones of their dead and then rebury them. Lanjonquière (1) heard similar

1. II, p. 319.

accounts, but reports: "It appears improbable that the Black Meau of Pakha dig up the bones again after three years, clothe them anew, and bury them again."

764 114 Contrary to my observations, Dhuraratsadorn (2) states

2. Page 173.

that, to be sure, no burning, but three types of burial are practiced among the Meau. As the first he names the lowering of the body sheltered in the coffin into the grave in the earth, as the second the erection of a high stone grave-mound on the grave, and as the third the platform burial. I do not find his assertions substantiated, however, either through personal observations or by other authors.

765 [292] The mourning period lasts twelve days. During this time, a white turban is worn by the closest relatives of the deceased, his parents and the surviving wives and children. Abadie (3), by the way, describes the same observation.

3. Page 153.

[582] [834] After the death of one of the parents, the children,

/118 cont./

765 and likewise a widower after the death of his wife, are for-
582 bidden to marry or to have sexual intercourse for one year.
834 Widows, however, are subject to these restrictions for one
week. The festival of the dead is celebrated one year after the
769 funeral at the latest. The date is not fixed; a sufficient supply
of food is collected for it first, since all the relatives and
friends of the deceased, even from the neighboring villages,
appear at this celebration. One to three pigs are slaughtered,
[556] depending on the wealth and the social position of the deceased
[574] and on the number of guests, the feast is prepared, and alcohol
[782] and rice are also served. No sacrifices, however, are offered
on this occasion, and there are no subsequent ceremonies.

764 Lajonquière (4) gives an impressive, somewhat different

4. II, p. 318.

description of a Meau burial: "The burial customs are not always the same among the various tribes, but in our opinion the following are the most invariable ones: When a Meau has died, the sorcerer, provided that there is one in the area, is informed. With or /119/ without his help, the deceased is clothed in his best garments and tied in an erect position to one of the partitions of the house; then the funeral rites begin, in which the friends and neighbors participate. They last three days, during which there is a succession of feasts and dances. They eat in honor of the dead and with many kind words invite him to participate. His children even try to squeeze pieces of meat between the stiff lips.

"One or two buffalo have been slaughtered for the guests;
764 a dog is killed for the deceased, prepared, and, with a paper
775 string in its mouth, which is tied to the wrist of the corpse,
is put beside it. (A Meau whom we questioned about the meaning of this custom told us that the dog was assigned the task of leading his master on the paths of the other world.)"

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Miao AE5

M 101 162 291 184 [582] A 131 162 [167]

/455 cont./

any rate, it turned out that the "Black" and the "Flowery Meau" are identical with the "White Meau" and actually differ only in that the women of the one Meau wear dark-blue skirts with stylized floral patterns in batik work, while those of the other Meau wear white skirts. Neither in the language nor in any racial or cultural element did further differences come to light. For judging the matter it seems to me to be especially decisive that the tribal endogamy which is otherwise strictly observed in practice does not apply between these three Meau tribes; thus, Black and White Meau may freely intermarry.

The Akha, too, like the Meau, reached the region inhabited by them today only in the course of their wandering. Among them, too, their continuous migratory movement obstructs any demographic coverage. With respect to Burma, the Gazetteer of Upper Burma (1) of the year 1900 stated that the

1. Vol. I, p. 588.

Akha belonged among the most numerous and most widespread mountain peoples of Kengtung. This supposedly could be stated positively for the eastern uplands. At any rate, they were supposed to be a people more numerous than most of their neighbors. Telford (2) /456/ considers them the numerically strongest

2. Page 90.

mountain people in the state of Kengtung and states that their homeland, like that of the Katschin /Kachin/ and Lahu, was China. Consequently, they are of "Mongolian origin."

The census of the state of Kengtung gives for the year 1931 12,968 Akha (6,484 houses). It is certain that only a part of that portion of the people living in Kengtung is included in this figure. The official Burma Census Rep. (1) of the same year

1. Vol. XI, Part I, p. 183.

gives 40,407 Akha for Burma as against 34,265 individuals in